

## **PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD**

**MONDAY, January 6, 2003**

**3:00 P.M., J. MARTIN GRIESEL ROOM, CENTENNIAL PLAZA II**

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:00 P.M., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with members Borys, Kreider, Senhauser, Spraul-Schmidt, Sullebarger, and Wallace present. Absent: Bloomfield, Clement and Raser

### **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Monday, February 11, 2002 meeting were approved (motion by Spraul-Schmidt, second by Wallace).

The minutes of the Monday, December 9, 2002 meeting were approved as amended (motion by Kreider, second by Sullebarger).

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 1674 CENTRAL PARKWAY, OVER-THE-RHINE (NORTH) HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam presented the staff report on this request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for cutting 100 air condition sleeves in all of the exterior walls of the building located at 1674 Central Parkway. The building is a contributing resource within the Over-the-Rhine (North) Historic District, although it is not within the National Register Historic District.

Ms. Kellam explained that the work had begun without a building permit and was stopped by the local B&I inspector. A permit application was subsequently filed for the thru-wall sleeves including engineering work to reinforce the walls weakened by the new work. Staff requested that the contractor provide information regarding alternative air conditioning systems with comparative costs. Because the building is heated with a hot water system, there is no centralized ductwork, so there are only two options: a forced air system or thru-the-wall units. The cost of a forced air system is \$636,000 more than the thru-the-wall system.

Ms. Kellam explained that although the general guidelines for rehabilitation stipulate that exterior changes should be compatible with and not alter original features, staff believes the only economical option is the thru-the-wall system. Staff recommended that the Board grant relief from the specific requirements of the guidelines based on the economics of the situation. Further, staff recommended that in order to lessen their visual impact, the vents should be painted the color of the brick on the elevation where they are situated.

In response to the Board, Ms. Kellam said that all elevations are visible from the street. The building faces west on Central Parkway and its south rear wall is on Logan Alley; the north wall is visible over a lower building facing Findlay Street and the south side is visible from Central through a surface parking lot. Mr. Kreider observed unfinished edging around the sleeves and suggested that the impact of the numerous sleeves would be mitigated if the masonry were professionally tuck pointed.

Greg Harnist, with Corcoran & Harnist Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc. was present to respond to questions from the Board. In response to Mr. Senhauser, he explained

that a structural engineer with Truman, Young and Associates had reviewed the conditions and designed a steel frame for the sleeves. The design has been submitted and approved by the B&I Plan Examiner.

### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Sullebarger, second by Borys) to take the following actions:

1. Find that the mechanical installation is not compatible with the historic building; however, the thru-wall-unit installation was the only economically feasible option for the owners;
2. Find that the owner has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Historic Conservation Board that there is no feasible alternative for a mechanical installation as per Section 741-13(h)(2) of the Historic Conservation Board Legislation; and
3. Grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the retention of the thru-wall air condition sleeves on the exterior elevations of the building at 1674 Central Parkway with the following conditions:
  - a. the new openings are tuck-pointed to match existing; and
  - b. the vents are painted the color of brick on the elevation where they are situated.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 1600-1606 AND 1601-1605 MAIN STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE (NORTH) AND (SOUTH) HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

Staff member Caroline Kellam presented the staff report for this request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of a non-contributing building and the rehabilitation of five contributing buildings in the Over-the-Rhine (North) and (South) Historic Districts.

Ms. Kellam indicated that the applicant would be applying for Tax Act certification as well as Community Development Block Grant money. The use of federal money necessitates a Section 106 Review, which will be completed by staff since the project does not negatively impact the historic district.

The rehabilitation of the five buildings will be for mixed use with commercial on the first floor and two to five apartments per building on the upper floors. The proposed work will include repair and/or replacement of the original fabric and the demolition of 1604 Main Street (a non-contributing building) for the construction of a surface parking lot.

Ms. Kellam explained that all of the proposed work meets the applicable guidelines for demolition and rehabilitation. She noted that staff has not received details of the fence behind 1601-1605 Main except that it will be 6' in height. Architect/applicant Don Beck said that the fence has not yet been designed. He said the developer is trying to purchase the (non-contributing) building at the rear of 1601. If they are able to purchase it, the building will be demolished to create a larger parking lot enclosed by a 6' decorative wrought iron fence. If the developer is unable to purchase the additional building, the smaller lot would be enclosed by a simple, 6' high, vertical wood board fence; the street entry would remain ungated.

In response to Mr. Kreider, Mr. Beck's associate Todd Lang stated the dormers and chimneys would be removed from 1600 Main. Additionally, the owners anticipate living in the unit to the west and are considering a roof deck. Mr. Lang indicated that some window and door openings facing Liberty Street would be bricked up. Mr. Kreider suggested that the brick be recessed when closing the two original doors on the south façade along Liberty. Mr. Beck added that 1600 Main would be painted; however, 1601 has never been painted and they do not anticipate painting it.

Ms. Sullebarger remarked that the project represents a major gateway to the center of Over-the-Rhine and given the scope of the project, the positive impact on the district will be particularly significant.

### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted (motion by Spraul-Schmidt, second by Wallace) to take the following actions:

1. Find that the building at 1604 Main Street is a non-contributing building within the Over-the-Rhine (North) Historic District;
2. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of 1604 Main Street;
3. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of the surface parking lot at 1604 Main Street and the rehabilitation of 1601-1605, 1600-1606 Main Street; and
4. Stipulate that all final plans be submitted to the Urban Conservator for review and approval prior to issuing a building permit or Certificate of Appropriateness.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS AND ZONING VARIANCE, 1308 RACE STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE (SOUTH) HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Cheri Rekow presented the staff report for a Certificate of Appropriateness and zoning variance for site improvements to the Emanuel Community Center located at 1308 Race Street, in the Over-the-Rhine (South) Historic District.

Ms. Rekow stated that the Board had previously seen a portion of this project when it reviewed 1315 Republic Street for demolition for an enclosed play area/courtyard. The fencing proposed at that time is similar to what is being proposed with this application. Ms. Rekow described the improvements as including the installation of a 6' wrought iron/masonry post fence around the perimeter of the parking lot at 13<sup>th</sup> and Race. Additionally, an 8' wrought iron fence with masonry posts is proposed for an entrance to the courtyard from Republic Street. A 10' high brick wall will abut the adjacent properties to the north within the courtyard. A window in the daycare room will be converted to a doorway; a new egress stair with an awning will be constructed. Ms. Rekow said the steps and handrail for the entrance to the daycare room are proposed to be pressure treated wood, but the applicant is amendable to changing them to metal. Zoning variances are being requested for the 8' high portion of fence along Republic Street and the 10' wall at the property line within the courtyard.

In considering the historic district guidelines and the Zoning Code, Ms. Rekow explained that while the proposed fencing material meets the guidelines, the height

does not. The guidelines indicate that fences at the street should be no greater three feet in height. The 10' brick wall within the courtyard is not visible from the street. Additionally, the Zoning Code does not permit fences in the R-7 residential zone in excess of 6' in height. The fence/gate at the Republic Street entrance is 8' and would require a variance. Likewise, the 10' brick wall within the courtyard requires a variance.

Mike Battouclette representing Emanuel Community Center and Richard Butz from Champlin/Haupt, Inc. were present to respond to questions from the Board. Mr. Butz confirmed for Mr. Kreider that the Republic Street entrance is 4 ft. wide and only for pedestrian ingress/egress. Regarding the new entryway and stair, Mr. Battouclette explained that without direct access, the center is permitted to care for no more than five children; with the access, they are permitted up to 14 children. He said that a handicap ramp was considered, but the space would not accommodate the 40' ramp required. Additionally, there was a \$2.8 million renovation completed two years ago, which put the building in compliance with ADA regulations.

The Board discussed prior variances they had granted in regards to height of fencing/walls, recalling never having granted a variance for a fence in excess of 7'. Mr. Senhauser stated that in granting the variance, the Board would be ensuring security for a children's play area at a daycare center, and not just screening a parking lot. Mr. Kreider added that by design, it reinforces, rather than detracts from the rhythm of the street.

#### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted (motion by Sullebarger, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to take the following actions:

1. Find that the proposed parking lot fence at 13<sup>th</sup> and Race Streets and that on Republic Street in excess of 3' are not consistent with the Over-the-Rhine (South) Historic District Guidelines and the fence in excess of 6' is not in conformance with the Cincinnati Zoning Code;
2. Find that the fences/gates along the Race, 13th and Republic Streets are appropriate as to use of materials and the heights are acceptable given the need for the security of the Emanuel Community Center, child-care facility and screens of automobiles;
3. Find that the proposed steps at the north entry and the 10' wall adjacent to the northern abutting properties are not visible from any street elevation;
4. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the fences, steps and wall as proposed; and
5. Approve the application for a zoning variance to permit the 8' high fence along the Republic Street property line and the 10' high wall, finding that the fence and wall:
  - a. are necessary for the operation and safety of the childcare center; and
  - b. will not adversely affect the character of the building and the historic architectural or aesthetic integrity of the district.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no other items for consideration by the Board, the meeting adjourned.

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William L. Forwood  
Urban Conservator

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John C. Senhauser  
Chairman

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Date